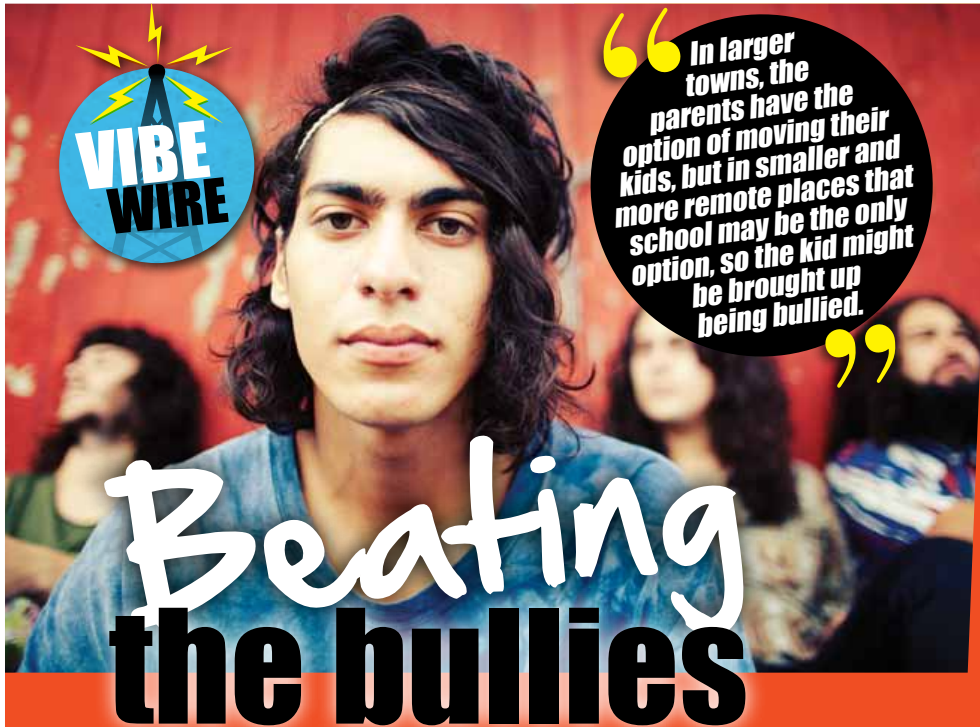


VIBE ACTIVITIES

VIBE WIRE – *Beating the bullies* page 8



Beating the bullies

Charles Thomas is encouraging youth to stand up for themselves and make a difference

BULLYING IS A MAJOR ISSUE IN SCHOOLS, WITH THREE OUT OF 10 STUDENTS BEING BULLIED AT SCHOOL. THIS INCREASES TO UP TO EIGHT OUT OF 10 IN RURAL SCHOOLS. ONE YOUNG MUSICIAN IS DOING HIS BIT TO TRY AND STOP IT.

Each year, Charles Thomas – marketing student at Griffith University and bass player from popular band The Medics – rides his bike from Townsville to Cairns to raise awareness about bullying in rural schools.

Charles says the idea came out of his voluntary youth work.

“I started doing the ride last year. I do volunteer youth work and a few of the kids I look after have been bullied. It was really cool being their mentor and encouraging them. When I first got there they had low self-esteem – they couldn’t talk to people or even look me in the eye – but

by the end of it we were learning how to play guitar and basketball,” he says.

“It sparked in me the idea that if I can be a role model to these kids, I could also be a role model to kids in North Queensland, where I am from and where our band is doing quite well – so I thought maybe I could be a role model to those kids, too.”

Charles says he has seen bullying in schools first-hand.

“I remember being at a school to give a talk and I went to the toilet and there was a kid being beaten up – so I had to step into that and pull them apart,” he says.

“Last year I rode a bicycle, with no support vehicle or friends, just myself and a backpack, 400km from Townsville to Cairns to raise awareness about bullying in rural schools. During the journey I was confronted by how real and damaging bullying really is. I was confronted with real-life stories where both home and school is tough.

“In larger towns, the parents have the option of moving their kids, but in smaller

“In larger towns, the parents have the option of moving their kids, but in smaller and more remote places that school may be the only option, so the kid might be brought up being bullied.”

and more remote places that school may be the only option, so the kid might be brought up being bullied. So this was just something that I knew I had to do – I want to help bring bullying to an end.”

He says the 400km ride last year was not only a challenge physically, but also mentally.

“It is tough to ride that distance, especially alone. But I am still a student so I couldn’t afford to hire a car. The only thing I had was a bike, so I decided to ride between the towns and it just worked out that way,” he says.

“Earlier this year, I rode from Auckland to Wellington and that was so hard I was actually crying at various points. It is harder doing it by yourself – there are big road trains up there and stuff.

This year, Charles says he is extending the distance he’ll ride from Townsville to Moosman.

“We are also raising money to fly up a team of young professionals to help and support the students,” he says.

Charles starts his ride on 8 July.

“It will take me 12 days to ride it because I am dropping into seven high schools.

Meanwhile, The Medics are currently involved in a songwriting project called the Vic Simms Project with Paul Kelly, which will feature on the program *Australian Story*. They are also recording an album at Gasworks Studios in Brisbane next month.

For more information about Charles’ ride, visit:
www.tothenorth.org

Bullying is all around us – at school, in the workplace and in the community. But that doesn't make it right.

Charles Thomas from *The Medics* is making a stand against bullying by riding his bike from Townsville to Mossman (north of Cairns) to draw attention to the problem.

READ *Beating the bullies* on page 8

ACTIVITY 1

BUILDING READING SKILLS



- skimming and scanning for information
- reading headings, text boxes and pictures
- reading for meaning
- making connections between the text and your world

There are three levels of comprehension questions:

- Literal** The answer is located in one sentence in the text.
- Inferred** You need to make links between sentences and graphics (such as illustrations, maps and tables) and what you already know.
- Applied** The answer is in your background knowledge, what you already know or feel.

1 Charles Thomas is a bass player in which band?

(literal)

- Cairns
- Griffith University
- The Medics
- North Queensland



2 What is the relationship between the photo, the heading and the main text? (inferred)
Explain how the heading is a pun (play on words).



3 What is the percentage of students who are bullied in rural schools? (inferred)

- 0.8%
- 8%
- 80%
- 8/10



4 Why would bullying be more of a problem in rural schools than other schools? (applied)

5 What is the overall purpose for writing this text? (applied)

For more information about Charles' ride,
head to www.tothenorth.org

ACTIVITY 2

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS – SPELLING

1 The spelling mistakes in these sentences have been underlined. Write the correct spelling for each word in the box.



There are a lot of bullys in schools.

Eight out of ten students are bullyed in rural schools.

This musishan is doing something about it.

2 Each sentence has one word that is incorrect. Write the correct spelling of the word in the box.

He does some volluntry youth work.

Lots of people are bullied.

It can be very damageing.



ACTIVITY 3

COPING STRATEGIES



Charles Thomas has seen the effects of bullying in schools. As a mentor, he is able to support students who are being bullied, so they stay positive and stand up for themselves.



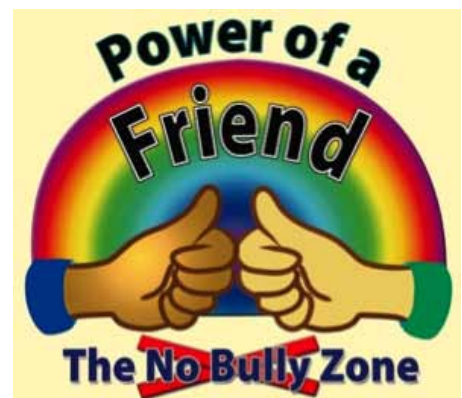
1 Read the list of coping strategies below.

Underline the ones that will help you to become more resilient, and help you to stand up for yourself in an assertive way.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| talk it over with a friend | give up |
| get angry | make a list of your good points |
| yell at your friends | talk to a teacher you trust |
| avoid going out | blame someone else |
| start a fight with someone | tell the person to stop |
| tell your parents what is happening | use positive self talk |
| learn a new skill | help others who are being bullied |
| punch someone | be respectful of others |
| keep it to yourself | blame yourself |
| try to find solutions | bully someone else |

ACTIVITY 4

HOW DO YOU MAKE A STAND AGAINST BULLYING



1 Choose one of the scenarios below (or choose a real-life situation that has happened to you) and write a couple of paragraphs to explain the coping strategies you would use to deal with it in a positive way.

Someone in your class always puts you down and makes jokes about you when you are contributing your ideas in class.

You see your friend being teased in the playground by a group of older students.

Inappropriate comments are posted on your Facebook page by students at your school.

My scenario

My coping strategies

Remember to:

- write in full sentences
- state your arguments clearly
- give reasons and personal examples for your arguments
- choose your words carefully to convince a reader of your opinions
- pay attention to your spelling and punctuation
- check and edit your writing so that it is clear for a reader